



REAL ESTATE NEWS

Newsletter Vol. 3

Welcome!

Well, the ground hog saw his shadow, so it looks like 6 more weeks of winter. We plan on using that time to get ready for Spring. How about you?

Inside this month's newsletter you will find valuable tips for preparing your home for Spring Market 2014, new featured listings, team successes and pertinent hyper local real estate news that we hope you will find useful and informative. Please feel free to pass this along to anyone you think would benefit. If you know of someone who would appreciate our level of service, please contact us with their name and business number, we will be happy to follow up and take great care of them! We are dedicated to your real estate results and always ready to help.

In this newsletter:

- **Featured listing & just sold!**
- **Hyper local market update!**
- **Five tips to get your home ready for the spring market!**

"My wife and I recently (within the past 2 years) sold two homes and purchased a new home. Selling a single home can be a stressful event, however, working and building a relationship with Ligaya made the experience less tasking. I should also note, that this process was completed within a 12 to 18 month period. We consider Ligaya a true professional who listens to the concerns of her clients. She also helped us find an appropriate mortgage consultant, as well as, real estate attorney. We would highly recommend her to our family and friends." - Greg & Lurlene A., Norwalk



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Just Sold!:

53 Prospect Street Unit
304

\$120,000



Just Reduced!

75 Valley View Drive

\$1,950,000



Amazing Waterfront Condominium

This feature listing is priced to sell at just \$650,000!

98 Southfield Avenue Unit 203, Stamford

Live the dream! Wake up each morning to spectacular direct water views from the oversized windows in the spacious master bedroom. This stunning apartment has it all. Beautifully renovated from top to bottom. Gourmet kitchen w/granite counters, Dacor gas range & Whirlpool stainless appliances has an open flow to the huge dining and living areas. Hardwood floors and crown moulding throughout. Enjoy the warmth of the fireplace. Listen to music on the surround sound. Relax with a meal cooked on your gas grill with it's own gas line installed, no propane tank necessary! The complex has a pool and hot tub as well as a lovely boardwalk which leads to the nearby docks and restaurants. Low CC's and 2 garage parking spaces. Absolutely priced to sell!

Hyper-local Market Update!

- **Trolley Service Connecting Harbor Point and Stamford Downtown Coming Soon!** Starting in Mid-February there will be a new free trolley service connecting Downtown Stamford with the Harbor Point area. The trolley will run in 30 minute circuits and make 14 stops along a loop connecting residents to many amenities in Stamford. For specific stops and additional information you can visit the Stamford Downtown website at <http://stamford-downtown.com/getting-around/harbor-point-trolley/>



Tips to Prepare Your Home for Sale This Spring

It may surprise you, but as we advise new clients listing their homes on the market to sell this spring, we start the pre-sale preparations with fighting the battle online.



Here's what we mean: Before the 2014 consumer visits a home, they research it online in ways that weren't even common when most home sellers were buying 5 or more years ago. Yes, it goes without saying that you should patch the water damage from that time the tub overflowed or clean your gutters. But that only addresses things *after* prospective buyers choose to look at your home. What about the information about your home they access online beforehand? The people you want to influence are not just those who come looking, but those who would check your home off their short list because of something they found on the Internet that they didn't like.

Here are a few key things to prepare your home for sale in the 2014 information age, which is going to have a dramatic effect on who gets top dollar fast for their home this spring and who has to reduce their price in the summer because they remain unsold.

1) Google your address. You wouldn't believe what people find when they do this. There are newspaper articles with incorrect addresses, websites with inaccurate information, and a ton of other websites that, perhaps worse, have no information on your home that should have a minimum of details. Get your [Walkscore](#). Check your [Zillow Zestimate](#). Realtors that have the knowledge can show you how to fix inaccurate information before you go on the market so you don't have to play catch up with a savvy buyer looking for a reason to make a lower offer or not bother coming to see your home at all.

2) Run your title report. This is another proactive way of avoiding problems which can kill a deal after months of time dealing with buyers, offers, contracts and inspections. Make sure an old mortgage is discharged. Make sure an old judgment from a divorce is satisfied. Deal with that easement you forgot about or the encroachment of the neighbor's fence that slowed down your purchase 15 years ago –forgot about that one too?

3) Go to the Building Department. Is that bathroom in the basement legal? Do you want to scramble at the last minute and spend top dollar to salvage a closing because you forgot it wasn't? What about other improvements that may not have a certificate of occupancy? That rear deck? The upgraded electrical system you had done 3 years ago? If your paperwork isn't in order before you go on the market, later on a buyer might walk and the town will make you pay dearly at the 11th hour.

Tips to Prepare Your Home for Sale This Spring (continued)

4) Get the home inspected. You want two kinds of inspections: a regular home inspection, and an environmental audit. Regular home inspections address things that a buyer's inspection would discover and help avoid stress later. It simply makes no sense to dwell in ignorance about the chimney lining and 100 other things you don't think about that the buyer will scrutinize closely once they choose your house. An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure in these cases.

The environmental audit should be a comprehensive assessment of air quality, mold, radon, testing submerged oil tanks, asbestos, pest infestation, and other concerns that are at the height of 2014 buyers' consciousness. We can't tell you how many times we have seen buyers frown when the other side says things like "My client thought that might be asbestos, but they've lived there for XX years with no problem." Absence of cancer is not exactly a high bar of assurance to people who want to raise their children in a home. Not addressing environmental concerns now can cost tens of thousands later in lost deals and price reductions, to say nothing of the actual remediation costs.

5) Stage your home. Hire a staging expert or use a Realtor that has staging experience. A home stager can maximize the sale price and minimize the time on market. Stagers do not simply help you de-clutter and decorate with better appeal. They understand buyer perceptions. They know how to deal with pet odor, smoker's homes, and many other things that the homeowner does not really have at the top of their mind after years living in their home. Staged homes sell faster, and they sell have a far higher likelihood of maximizing market value than a home that was not staged.

Of course, perhaps the most important thing to preparing the home is choosing the right agent. A good agent will help you get everything done we have described and our team can help you navigate all of this and more. Call us today for a personal home evaluation and help getting your home ready and on the market by this Spring.

*Partially sourced from Westchester Real Estate Blog